

Medical Officer's
Report
For the Year 1910.

January 31st, 1911.

To the Chairman and Members of the
FELIXSTOWE & WALTON
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

MORTALITY.

I have the honour to present to you my Annual Report for the year 1910. It is satisfactory to notice that our Death Rate of 8·6 per 1,000, is the lowest recorded during the last fourteen years, and compares very favourably with the general Death Rate of 13·4 for the whole of England and Wales.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

Our Infantile mortality too is particularly low, being only 76 per 1,000 births registered, as compared with a rate of 106 for the whole country.

There has been only one death from the principal notifiable epidemic diseases, so that if we do not count deaths from measles the epidemic death rate is ·11, as compared with ·99 for the country generally; while if the three deaths from Measles are added to the single death from diphtheria, it is ·45. These figures are certainly a matter for congratulation.

BIRTHS.

Our Birth Rate again is very low, being only 16·4 as compared with 21·8 for the whole of England and Wales. The reasons for this I have considered in previous reports.

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT.

The Urban District of Felixstowe and Walton consists of a tract of land about $6\frac{1}{2}$ square miles in area, bounded on the South-east by the sea ; on the North-east by the estuary of the river Deben ; on the South-west by the estuary of the Orwell, and on the North-west by a line commencing from the Orwell, about 3 miles from Landguard point, and running by a slightly irregular course to a point about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the mouth of the Deben. A considerable area of marshy land adjoins both rivers, but the residential portions of Felixstowe and Walton have for the most part an elevation of about 65 feet above sea level.

The subsoil is of red crag of the Pliocene formation overlying the London clay which here and there comes to the surface, but only to a very slight extent and in a few scattered places, so that the surface dries rapidly after rain.

The climate is dry and bracing, the bright sunshine recorded during 1910 being 1,768 hours ; this compares favourably with the record of every other town in England except Torquay which has a record of 1,770 hours. The amount of bright sunshine recorded for Felixstowe is usually considerably in excess of the

district value for the Eastern Counties. The total rainfall for 1910 was 25·41 inches, the lowest recorded for an East Coast watering place.

The greater part of Felixstowe and Walton has been built during the last fifteen years and there are no insanitary areas. The district is regularly inspected by the Sanitary Officers, the total number of houses being 1,821. There are no regular industries with the exception of the labour employed at the Felixstowe dock, the flour mills and the maltings. For the rest, the population consists mainly of lodging house and shop keepers, with a considerable number of leisured residents of no regular occupation, and of others who have work or business in Ipswich.

The great majority of the houses are provided with one or more water closets, no waste water closets being used ; but in 108 houses there are pail closets or privies, 98 being provided with movable receptacles and 10 with fixed receptacles. Every effort is made to have water closets provided and connected with the sewer wherever the conditions render it possible.

The plans of all proposed new buildings are submitted to the Council, and, when the architects or builders receive notice of approval, printed forms are sent to them to fill up requiring the inspection of various works as the building proceeds in the following order :

- (1) Commencement.
- (2) Foundations.
- (3) Damp-proof course.
- (4) Drainage.
- (5) Completion.

The building inspector goes many times to the work in addition to the calls he receives in connection with the printed forms, and takes note that the deposited plans, which are passed in accordance with the Council's Bye-Laws, are strictly carried out, *e.g.*, as to thickness of walls, air space around the building, hearths, ventilation, height of rooms, etc. Finally, the drains and plumbers' work are tested on completion.

The Council do not permit the erection of sanitary conveniences other than water closets, inside or in the yards of new buildings.

It is usual for the occupiers of houses provided with earth or pail closets to dispose of the excrement on their own gardens, but in twenty-five instances privies or earth closets have been emptied by the Council's workmen, who have also emptied cesspools on seventy-eight occasions during the year.

SANITARY WORK.

The following particulars supplied to me by the Surveyor form a concise record of work carried out in connection with drainage, refuse disposal, abatement of nuisances, etc. :

New Sewers constructed	..	..	386 yards.
New Surface Water Drains	..	..	776 „
Connections to Main Sewer	..	..	27
Connections to Surface Water Drains		..	3
Houses completed	..	..	48
Nuisances abated	..	..	12
Rooms disinfected (in 26 premises)	..	..	57
Privies emptied	..	..	25
Cesspools emptied	..	..	78

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The water carriage system of sewage disposal is now almost universal throughout the district, and the absence of natural fall has rendered necessary the adoption of a system of pumping. The hydro pneumatic system of Shone which was installed about 20 years ago has worked most satisfactorily, and the additional air compressing plant which was laid down in 1908 has provided ample reserve power for emergencies. The sewage is forced from the automatic ejectors into a rising main and from this flows into the estuary of the Orwell during the ebb tide. During the latter part of ebb and the whole of the flood tide the sewage accumulates in the mains. Storage tanks are not used and the sewage is not treated in any way.

WATER SUPPLY.

The subject of water supply was fully dealt with in my last report, and the analyses continue to be satisfactory. It was hoped that the adoption by the Water Company of Candy's Patent Filters, which by means of polarite oxidise and remove the soluble bicarbonate of iron, would entirely remove the cause of any complaints, but though there is undoubtedly great improvement, complaints occasionally arise.

Whenever analysis is made the result has shown the water to be absolutely wholesome, and so far as deposit is concerned there is very little as a rule. There must, no doubt, have been a large amount of hydrated oxide of iron deposited in the larger mains before the commencement of the filtration system, and the complete removal of the former will necessarily take a long time.

The water which has about 16 degrees of temporary, and 5 of permanent hardness, is not softened by any process before being delivered to the consumers.

COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES.

The Cowsheds and Dairies are regularly inspected and samples are systematically analysed under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act. No instance of adulteration has been detected and in many cases the milk has been found exceptionally rich in character. Notices were sent during July calling the attention of milk vendors to a clause in the Public Health Amendment Act of 1907, requiring them to notify to the Medical Officer of Health of the district in which their milk is sold, all cases of infectious disease among their employés, and a general request was added for care as to the cleanliness of their carts. Washing of the hands of the milkers and of the udders of the cows with soap and water before milking is insisted upon in all cases.

BAKEHOUSES.

The condition of the Bakehouses is, on the whole, satisfactory, but two are in underground premises. Care has been taken that the state of the latter should be made as clean, light, and well ventilated as possible, many improvements having been carried out, but it has been found impracticable to insist on their abolition without undue hardship to their owners, as they were in use for many years before the passing of the Act forbidding the construction of bakehouses of this kind. Regular and systematic supervision is exercised.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

The Slaughter Houses are also clean and well kept, but most of them are undesirably situated in the more populous parts of the district. On sanitary as well as humanitarian grounds it is desirable to consider the advantages of a Public Abattoir, which would avoid the inhumanity and uncleanness of keeping animals in the proximity of the place where they are to be killed.

All of the slaughter houses are well drained and have an adequate water supply. In a memorandum of the Local Government Board it has been pointed out that private slaughter houses in densely populated areas are veritable nurseries of rats, and on this ground the construction of a well-arranged and suitably situated Public Abattoir is eminently desirable.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The whole country has suffered from a severe epidemic of Measles during the last year, and our district having some years ago adopted the exceptional course of placing Measles on the list of notifiable diseases we have a record of 213 cases.

Notification has the advantage ~~of course~~ of giving us notice of an epidemic during the earlier part of its course, and opportunity was taken of closing the Council Schools and Sunday Schools with a view to stopping it. This ~~course~~ ^{step} was ^{taken} adopted after consultation with Dr. Stewart, the Medical Inspector of Schools for East Suffolk, and the schools were closed from February 7th to March 7th.

The number of notifications however continued undiminished during the period of school closure, and it is open to question whether any good purpose was served by it. The epidemic did not cease until the end of June, after which only two notifications were received.

Apart from Measles our epidemic rate has been small, the total number of notifications being 228, including 10 cases of Diphtheria, 2 of Scarlet Fever, 2 of German Measles and 1 of Erysipelas.

The Isolation Hospital has been open at intervals during the year, thirteen cases having been treated there, one of whom was in residence on January 1st, 1910. This case was admitted during December, 1909. Of the twelve cases admitted during 1910, nine had Diphtheria, one Scarlet Fever and two Tonsillitis. The two latter were isolated on suspicion and discharged after a few days.

The total cost per patient, as the appended figures of the accountant clerk show, is much heavier proportionally than when the hospital was continuously occupied, being £18 10s. per head. Taking the figures of the current financial year, the average residence of each patient being 28 days, the cost per week per head is £4 12s. 6d., but this includes rent, rates, and establishment charges for the whole of the nine months, and may be regarded in part as insurance against an epidemic.

The following data are supplied jointly by the accountant clerk and myself.

Total number of patients treated in the hospital since it was opened in July, 1908, to the end of 1910—45.

Annual expenditure during first financial year from July, 1908, to March 31st, 1909	£265	5	6
Excluding £52 18s. 9d., the cost of original furnishing	£212	6	9
From April 1st, 1909, to March 31st, 1910	£229	14	7
From April 1st, 1910, to Dec. 31st, 1910	£110	19	8
Receipts from patients, Year ending March 31st, 1910	£20	9	0
Current year to December 31st, 1910 ..	£17	10	6
Cost per patient, Year ending March 31st, 1909	£12	12	6
Excluding cost of furnishing	£10	2	3
Year ending March 31st, 1910	£12	15	3
Deducting receipts from expenses ..	£11	12	6
Current year	£18	10	0
Deducting receipts	£15	11	6

CAMPAIGN AGAINST RATS.

During September, four cases of Pneumonic Plague occurred in another district in Suffolk, and in view of the knowledge that rats suffer from this disease and communicate it by the fleas which infest their fur, the Local Government Board advised the employment of drastic measures for the destruction of these vermin.

The means suggested for this purpose by Dr. Bulstrode, a Medical Officer of the Board, were fully and successfully carried out, with the result that very few rats remain in the district. Full details as to the measures adopted and the numbers of rats destroyed have been sent to the Local Government Board in special reports. At the present time the Council pay a small reward for each rat killed in the district, and rat-catchers are employed occasionally as they are required.

TUBERCULOSIS:

Tuberculosis is not notifiable in this district except in the case of patients attended by the Poor Law officials, in whom it is of course compulsory. No such cases have been notified. After a death from Consumption the rooms formerly occupied by the patient are disinfected by the officials of the Council in all cases where the Medical attendant gives notice, and this procedure is also adopted after death, removal, or recovery of a patient from any other infectious disease.

Our Death Rate from all forms of Tuberculosis is 1·2 per 1,000, a figure which compares favourably with the general Death Rate for Tuberculosis throughout the country, though in proportion to our own total Death Rate it is high, being 11·8 per cent. of the total Death Rate from all causes.

I have already pointed out that the incidence of and Death Rate from epidemic disease in Felixstowe

is exceptionally small, and it seems particularly unfortunate that our endeavours to preserve this desirable state of affairs, and to prevent rather than arrest an epidemic should bring upon us an unenviable notoriety on the part of a certain section of the sensational Press. The ill-considered and foolishly worded reports in some of the daily papers seem to have been designed to play upon the timidity of an excitable public and lead them to believe that disease existed when only exemplary precautions against it were being adopted.

The appended tables give details as to vital statistics, causes of death, infectious diseases and infantile mortality.

My thanks are due to the Council for the support they have given to my work and recommendations.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

G. J. CONFORD, M.D., Oxon.,

Medical Officer of Health.

FELIXSTOWE AND WALTON URBAN DISTRICT.

Vital Statistics of the Whole District during 1910 and Previous Years.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.				Total Deaths in Public Institu- tions in the District.	Deaths of Non- residents registered in Public Institu- tions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institu- tions beyond the District.	Nett Deaths at all Ages belonging to the District.	
		Number.	Rate.*	At all Ages.		Number.	Rate.*					
				Under 1 Year of Age								
				Number.	Rate per 1000 Births registered							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Number.	Rate.*
1900	5868	140	25·0	16	114·2	67	11·6				12	13
1901	5815	166	28·5	14	84·3	75	12·8				64	11·4
1902	6194	140	22·6	15	107·0	73	11·7				74	12·7
1903	6516	140	21·4	12	85·7	65	9·9				72	11·6
1904	6853	149	21·7	18	120·8	69	10·0				65	9·9
1905	7207	146	20·2	10	68·4	76	10·5	2	2		79	10·0
1906	7550	158	20·9	15	94·9	74	9·8				74	10·2
1907	7900	138	17·4	6	43·4	71	8·9			4	83	10·4
1908	8300	160	19·2	18	112·5	85	10·2				75	9·5
1909	8550	144	16·7	13	90·27	81	9·4			2	87	10·4
Averages for years 1900-1909.	7075	148	20·8	13·7	92·5	73·6	10·4				75·6	10·6
1910	8825	145	16·4	10	68·9	76	8·6				76	8·6

* Rates in Columns 4, 8, and 13 calculated per 1000 of estimated population.

TABLE III.

FELIXSTOWE AND WALTON URBAN DISTRICT. Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1910.

Notifiable Disease.	Cases Notified in Whole District.						
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.					
		Under 1.	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 65.	65 and upwards.
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup)	10		2	8			
Erysipelas	1					1	
Scarlet fever	2			2			
Measles	213	11	84	114	3	1	
German Measles	2			2			
Totals	228	11	86	126	3	2	

TABLE IV.

FELIXSTOWE AND WALTON URBAN DISTRICT.

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH DURING YEAR 1910.

Causes of Death.		Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring in or beyond the District.						
		All ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.
		2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Measles ..	..	3	1	2				
Whooping Cough ..	..	1		1				
Diphtheria (including Membranous croup) ..	..	1			1			
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) ..	..	8	1	1			4	2
Other tuberculous diseases ..	..	1					1	3
Cancer, malignant disease ..	..	6						4
Bronchitis ..	..	11	3	2	1	1		
Pneumonia ..	..	1			1			
Pleurisy ..	..	1						1
Other diseases of Respiratory Organs ..	..	1					1	
Premature birth ..	..	3	3					
Heart diseases ..	..	8					3	5
Accidents ..	..	7				2	4	1
Peritonitis ..	..	1					1	
Pyonephrosis ..	..	1					1	
Diabetes ..	..	2					1	1
Cerebral Hæmorrhage or Embolism ..	..	5					3	2
All other causes ..	..	15	2				3	10
All causes ..	..	76	10	6	3	3	25	29

TABLE V.

FELIXSTOWE AND WALTON URBAN DISTRICT.
INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1910.

Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

Causes of Death.	Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	Total under 1 Month.	2-3 Months.	3-4 Months.	5-6 Months.	8-9 Months.	Total Deaths under 1 Year.
Measles							1	1
Premature Birth	1	2	3				1	3
Tuberculous Diseases						1		1
Convulsions						1		1
Bronchitis				1	1		1	3
Status Lymphatus					1			1
Totals	1	2	3	1	2	1	3	10